

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-13 ACDA-10 MC-02
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-----271040Z 076787 /14

O 270732Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4190

AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

INFO CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

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TOKYO PASS O'DONOHUE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, KS, US

SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY HABIB/GENERAL BROWN SEOUL DEPARTURE
PRESS CONFERENCE

1. THE FOLLOWING IS THE COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT OF UNDER SECRETARY
HABIB/GENERAL BROWN DEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE AT KIMPO AIRPORT
KOREA, MAY 27.

2. UNDER SECRETARY HABIB: I HAVE A BRIEF STATEMENT I WOULD
LIKE TO MAKE BEFORE PROCEEDING TO YOUR QUESTIONS.

3. GENERAL BROWN AND I HAVE HAD FULL, FRIENDLY, AND CONSTRUCTIVE
CONSULTATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA ON
THE U.S. GROUND FORCES WITHDRAWAL. AS PRESIDENT CARTER DIRECTED,
WE HAVE ALSO CONVEYED TO PRESIDENT PARK AND THE SENIOR OFFICERS
IN THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT WITH WHOM WE HAVE MET OUR FIRM DETERMINATION
TO MAINTAIN THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO THE SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC
OF KOREA. WE HAVE ALSO CONVEYED OUR VIEW THAT THE GROUND FORCES
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WITHDRAWAL WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN A MANNER WHICH PRESERVES THE
MILITARY BALANCE AND DOES NOT ENDANGER THE SECURITY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

4. WE BELIEVE THAT OUR DISCUSSIONS OVER THE PAST TWO DAYS
HAVE BEEN OPEN, COOPERATIVE AND WIDE-RANGING AS BEFITS ALLIES
DEALING WITH A MATTER OF MUTUAL INTEREST. WE BELIEVE WE HAVE

LAI A SOUND BASIS FOR OUR COOPERATIVE EFFORTS IN ADDRESSING THE GROUND FORCES WITHDRAWAL ISSUES AND FOR OUR CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE SECURITY OF KOREA.

5. FINALLY, GENERAL BROWN AND I WISH TO CONVEY OUR PERSONAL APPRECIATION FOR THE WARM AND FRIENDLY RECEPTION ACCORDED US BY EVERYONE.

6. Q: I ASK TWO QUESTIONS FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTRY PRESS CORPS. THE FIRST QUESTION IS WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR THE UNITED STATES TO WANT TO PULL OUT ITS TROOPS FROM KOREA? THE SECOND QUESTION IS WHAT IS THE U.S. POSITION ON THE POSSIBILITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA DEVELOPING ITS OWN NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN CASE THE UNITED STATES PULLS OUT ITS TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS FROM KOREA?

7. UNDER SECRETARY HABIB: IN RESPONSE TO THE FIRST QUESTION. I THINK ALL OF YOU ARE PROBABLY FAMILIAR WITH THE FACT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER YESTERDAY IN A PRESS CONFERENCE DISCUSSED HIS DECISION WITH RESPECT TO THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA. AT THAT TIME HE MADE IT CLEAR, AND WE HAVE SOUGHT HERE TO GAIN UNDERSTANDING OF CERTAIN RELEVANT FACTORS. FIRST OF ALL, WE ARE CONVINCED THAT KOREA IN TERMS OF ITS OWN CAPABILITIES, ECONOMIC STRENGTH, MORALE AND SPIRIT OF ITS PEOPLE IN RESPECT OF THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE NORTH AND THE SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN SECURITY HAS ACHIEVED THE CAPACITY, THE CAPABILITY OF SELF-RELIANT DEFENSE WITH THE SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES.

8. IN ADDITION, THE UNITED STATES IS COMMITTED WITHIN THE TERMS UNCLASSIFIED

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OF THE MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY TO SUPPORT THE SECURITY OF KOREA. THE PRESIDENT HAS REITERATED HIS FIRM ADHERANCE TO THE TREATY COMMITMENT. MOREOVER, IN OUR VIEW WITH THE FORCES THAT WILL REMAIN - AND YOU WILL ALL RECALL THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS INDICATED THAT WE WILL RETAIN SUBSTANTIAL POWER WITHIN KOREA- AND THE FORCES IN THE GENERAL AREA IN CONJUNCTION WITH KOREAN CAPABILITY AND WHEN SUPPORTED BY THE COMMITMENT OF THE MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY THE DEFENSE OF KOREA AND THE SECURITY OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE WILL BE ASSURED. AND THEREFORE IT IS POSSIBLE TO CONSIDER AND TO ACHIEVE THE WITHDRAWAL THAT IS NOW PROGRAMMED.

9. WITH RESPECT TO YOUR SECOND QUESTION; AS YOU KNOW NORMALLY AND IN USUAL TRADITION WE DO NOT COMMENT PUBLICLY ON QUESTIONS AFFECTING THE DEPLOYMENT OF AMERICAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS. AND I WOULD NOT PROPOSE TO ADDRESS THAT QUESTION. OUR GENERAL POSITION WITH RESPECT TO NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION HAS BEEN LAID DOWN BY THE PRESIDENT SOME TIME AGO IN GENERAL POLICY STATEMENTS ISSUED IN WASHINGTON.

10. Q: (INAUDIBLE) I HAVE TWO QUESTION. MY FIRST QUESTION IS WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO PRESIDENT PARK'S PROPOSAL THAT THERE MUST BE PRIOR SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS BEFORE THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS? MY SECOND QUESTION IS: WHAT IS THE POSITION OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION REGARDING THE FOUR POWER TALKS THAT WERE PROPOSED, AS YOU KNOW, BY PRESIDENT FORD AND KISSINGER?

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11. HABIB: ALL RIGHT, LET ME ANSWER BOTH QUESTIONS. FIRST OF ALL OF COURSE PRESIDENT PARK DID NOT QUITE STATE THE POSITION WITH RESPECT TO SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AS YOU HAVE STATED IT. I TAKE IT THAT YOU MEAN WHAT IS OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD PRESIDENT PARK'S VIEW THAT APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE TO PROVIDE FOR THE ONGOING SECURITY AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND FORCES?

12. THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS THAT OUR REACTION TO PRESIDENT PARK'S VIEWS IS THAT IT IS PERFECTLY REASONABLE AND RATIONAL. OBVIOUSLY IT COINCIDES WITH THE STATEMENT MADE BY PRESIDENT CARTER THAT IN CONJUNCTION WITH AND PARALLEL TO THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND FORCES, THE UNITED STATES WILL RETAIN ITS SECURITY COMMITMENT AND AT THE SAME TIME ASSIST TO CREATE AN IMPROVED KOREAN CAPABILITY TO DEAL WITH ITS OWN SECURITY.

13. NOW, WITH RESPECT TO THE SECOND QUESTION I WOULD SAY THAT THE UNITED STATES' POSITION REMAINS AS IT HAS BEEN THAT WE ARE PREPARED, AS WE HAVE BEEN PREPARED AND HAS BEEN AGREED IN CONSULTATION

WITH THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, TO MEET TO DISCUSS THE LONG TERM PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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THE OTHER SIDE. THAT PROPOSAL WAS MADE PREVIOUSLY IN THE UN, OUTSIDE THE UN AND IT REMAINS VALID.

14. Q: GENERAL BROWN, COULD YOU TELL US IF THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT SUGGESTED ANY POSSIBLE WAY THAT THE PLANNED AMERICAN ACTIONS RELATED TO THE WITHDRAWAL WOULD FORCE THEM TO CONSIDER BECOMING A NUCLEAR POWER?

15. GENERAL BROWN: PRESIDENT PARK AS WELL AS MINISTER SUH OUTLINED CERTAIN SPECIFIC ACTIONS WHICH THEY FELT SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PARALLEL WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF OUR GROUND FORCES. AS UNDER SECRETARY HABIB SAID, THOSE ACTIONS ARE EMINENTLY SENSIBLE AND WILL FOLLOW PRESIDENT CARTER'S DETERMINATION TO NOT DISTURB THE MILITARY BALANCE ON THE PENINSULA. AND I ALONG WITH UNDER SECRETARY HABIB WILL NOT DISCUSS NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

16. Q: ONE POINT I WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY, I HAVE NOT YET HEARD ON THE RECORD AND STATEMENT AS TO WHETHER THE GROUND TROOPS THAT ARE TO BE WITHDRAWN ARE ALL OF THE GROUND TROOPS OR PART OF THE GROUND TROOPS. HAS THE PRESIDENT DECIDED TO REMOVE SOMETHING ABOVE AND BEYOND THE SECOND INFANTRY DIVISION?

17. BROWN: THE PLANNED WITHDRAWAL OF THE GROUND TROOPS INCLUDES ULTIMATELY THE 2ND U.S. DIVISION. THERE WILL BE SOME REMAINING U.S. ARMY SOLDIERS ON THE PENINSULA, WHOSE DUTIES WILL BE TO SUPPORT THE AIR FORCE UNITS THAT STAY HERE AND PROVIDE CERTAIN TYPES OF COMMUNICATIONS AND GENERAL SUPPORT IN LOGISTICS THAT WILL CONTINUE TO BE REQUIRED. BUT THE COMBAT ELEMENT OF THE 2ND DIVISION ITSELF IS TO BE WITHDRAWN.

18. Q: INCLUDING THE MISSILE UNITS?

19. BROWN: ALL COMBAT ELEMENTS, YES.

20. Q: DID YOU DISCUSS WITH THE PRESIDENT IN ANY SPECIFIC OR GENERAL UNCLASSIFIED

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TERMS THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND WHAT WAS HIS RESPONSE? PARTICULARLY TO YOUR MEETING WITH SOME OF THE LEADING DISSIDENT FIGURES?

21. HABIB: GENERAL BROWN AND I, AS YOU KNOW, WERE SENT OUT HERE BY PRESIDENT CARTER TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM OF WITHDRAWAL OF OUR GROUND FORCES. WE DID WHAT WE WERE SENT TO DO AND THAT IS WHAT WE ARE ADDRESSING TODAY. WHATEVER OTHER DISCUSSIONS MAY HAVE OR MAY NOT HAVE TAKEN PLACE WILL HAVE TO REMAIN WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE ROOMS. I DO NOT INTEND TO DISCUSS ANYTHING ELSE AT THIS TIME.

22. Q: MR. SECRETARY CAN YOU ELABORATE ON WHAT IS MEANT BY COMPENSATORY MEASURES AND WHAT HAS BEEN REQUESTED SPECIFICALLY AS COMPENSATORY MEASURES?

23. HABIB: THAT REMAINS TO BE COMPLETELY DEFINED. BUT WHAT IS OBVIOUSLY INTENDED IS THAT THE COMBAT CAPABILITY THAT LEAVES WITH THE 2ND DIVISION WOULD BE TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, AND THAT EXTENT TO BE DETERMINED IN CONSULTATION WITH THE KOREANS, TO BE TRANSFERRED THROUGH THE AUGMENTATION OF KOREAN MILITARY CAPABILITY EXACTLY HOW THAT WILL BE DONE, WITH RESPECT TO WHAT QUANTITY OR QUALITY, IN WHAT AMOUNTS, WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF INTENSIVE CONSULTATION BETWEEN OUR PEOPLE AND THE RELEVANT KOREAN PEOPLE. IT WILL ALSO BE AFFIRMED AND CONSIDERED IN MORE DETAIL DURING THE FORTHCOMING SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING, WHICH IS AN ANNUAL AFFAIR BETWEEN THE AMERICAN AND KOREAN DEFENSE AUTHORITIES.

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24. BROWN: I THINK WE CAN BE MORE SPECIFIC. THE TYPES OF THINGS WE ARE OBVIOUSLY BOTH INTERESTED IN, THAT IS, WE AND THE FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, THEIR COMMANDERS, ARE SUCH THINGS AS ANTI-TANK WEAPONS, CERTAIN COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, AND

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF ARMORED VEHICLES, TANKS, THINGS THAT THE 2ND U.S. DIVISION HAS HAD A LARGER ALLOCATION OF THAN HAVE SOME OF THE ROK DIVISIONS.

25. Q: IS THE WITHDRAWAL PROCESS IRREVERSIBLE AND ARE THERE ANY CONDITIONS IN WHICH U.S. COMBAT UNITS WOULD BE RETURNED TO THE KOREAN PENINSULA?

26. HABIB: THE PRESIDENT HAS STATED THE POLICY THAT WE WILL WITHDRAW OUR GROUND FORCES IN FOUR TO FIVE YEARS AND THAT IS A CLEAR AND SIMPLE STATEMENT OF POLICY. IT IS UNDERSTOOD BY ALL THOSE CONCERNED. THERE IS NO WAY OF INTERPRETING THAT IN ANY OTHER WAY OTHER THAN A POLICY HAS BEEN LAID DOWN. AS YOU KNOW FOUR TO FIVE YEARS IS THE PERIOD THAT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, AND THERE HASN'T BEEN ANY QUESTION OF THE GENERAL PURPOSE INVOLVED. I MEAN THERE IT IS, I DON'T KNOW HOW--IF WHAT YOU WANT ME TO SAY IS THAT THE PRESIDENT CAN CHANGE HIS MIND, THAT'S NOT UP TO ME TO SAY.
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27 Q: GENERAL BROWN, YOU DID MOLLIFY YOUR COMMANDERS AND SOME OF THE KOREAN COMMANDERS ON WHETHER THE PULLOUT WILL OR WILL NOT INCREASE THE DANGER OF WAR?

28. BROWN: DID I MOLLIFY THEM? I DON'T KNOW, YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK THEM. BUT I CERTAINLY DON'T THINK THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE 2ND U.S. DIVISION, ON THE SCHEDULE AND IN THE MANNER WITH THE COMPENSATORY ACTIONS THAT WE WILL WORK OUT WITH THE KOREANS, WILL UNDULY INCREASE THE RISK OF WAR ON THE PENINSULA. THAT'S A VIEW THAT'S SHARED BY THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF IN THE UNITED STATES, OUR INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATIONS, AND I THINK IT'S A VIEW THAT'S SHARED BY GENERAL VESSEY AND HIS SENIOR COMMANDERS HERE.
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Message Attributes

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